

Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

ETHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF LONDON.

---

## I.—*On Language as a Test of the Races of Man.* By JOHN CRAWFURD, Esq.

(*Read December* 2, 1862.)

ON former occasions I have referred to the subject of this paper, but it appears to me to deserve a more detailed consideration, and this is what I now propose to bestow upon it. I do not hesitate at once to affirm that language, although yielding valuable evidence of the history and migrations of man, affords no sure test of the Race he belongs to. The proofs of this are, in my opinion, abundant, and I select a few of them in illustration.

The majority of the people of the British Islands, who 2,000 years ago spoke their own native tongues, whatever these may have been, now speak a language derived from Germany, on which has been engrafted a considerable portion of one which had its origin in Italy, while of their native tongues two examples only remain, and these, without doubt, doomed in a few generations to extinction as living languages.

The case in France is similar to that of our own islands. In the time of Julius Cæsar the people spoke at least three different languages, and if we include the Roman province of Transalpine Gaul, probably four or five. With the exception of two inconsiderable fragments, doomed, like the native British idioms, to extinction, these have been supplanted by a language of Italian origin.

Of the language which we suppose to have been spoken in Egypt in the times of the Pharaohs, and which was a written tongue that had received considerable cultivation, there remains at present but a mere fragment. For about 1,000 years the leading language was Greek, and now both the Egyptian and the Greek have been supplanted by the Arabic, the almost complete

revolution in speech which brought this about having been accomplished in much less than twelve centuries.

The language spoken and written by the subjects of King David and King Solomon has been a dead one for some five-and-twenty centuries. As in Egypt, the prevailing language of Palestine for several centuries was Greek, and it is now Arabic.

In Northern India there are two dead languages,—in Southern India one, and in the island of Java one; yet at best we can only conjecture of what people these were the living speeches, or, indeed, even what the localities in which they were spoken.

To the New World and its islands there have been transplanted, within the last three centuries, several millions of Africans speaking their own many native idioms. All these idioms have totally disappeared, and they now speak languages derived from Germany and Italy.

But between the languages of certain portions of the earth there exists a striking similarity in sound and grammatical structure; from which unquestionable fact it has been argued that all the people in whose language this affinity is found must necessarily belong to one and the same race of man. My own conviction is, that this plausible theory is utterly groundless and opposed to notorious facts, a few of which I shall state in proof.

In phonetic character, in grammatical structure, and in some cases even in words, there exists a near resemblance between certain languages of Northern but not of Southern India, and most, but by no means between all the ancient and modern languages of Europe. From this fact some ethnologists have jumped to the conclusion that the Oriental and Western people, between whose languages this affinity exists, must necessarily be of the same blood, or in other terms, of one and the same race of man. In India, however, there neither now exists, nor does history tell us that there ever did exist, a race of fair complexion resembling Europeans: neither does there exist in Europe, nor is there even a tradition of there ever having existed, a race of black men like the Hindus. Hence, as the fact has been well ascertained, that neither time, climate, nor locality will produce any material alteration of race, and assuredly not such a one as would turn a black skin into a white one, or the reverse, we must come to the inevitable conclusion that the theory which makes race and language synonymous is, in this instance at least, nothing better than an ethnological figment. Such being the case, it follows that such terms as Indo-European, Indo-Germanic, and Aryan, are but the coined expressions of a baseless theory, and ought to be discontinued.

The fact of the existence of a certain affinity in sound and structure, and even of a virtual correspondence in a few words,

between certain of the languages of India and certain of those of Europe sufficiently strange, must be accounted for on some other ground than by supposing that two races of men are of one and the same stock, who yet bear each other little more resemblance than Negroes do to Mongolians, or Red Indians to Malays. The migrations through which the affinity, in so far as similarity of words is concerned, was brought about, belong, we may be assured, to passages in the rude and early history of man of unfathomable antiquity, far beyond the reach of human research. If we are as yet unable satisfactorily to determine to what Indian people and Indian language we are to ascribe the Indian words found in the jargon of the gypsies—a people who first appeared in Europe but a few centuries ago—how can we pretend to account for the introduction of words so obscure in their origin, that we must reckon by thousands of years, since history yields no light whatever?

The class of monosyllabic languages appears to me to afford a very thorough refutation of the theory which would make language a test of race. These tongues extend all the way from the eastern frontier of Bengal to the sea of Japan. In sound and structure it is in their very nature that there should exist a strong affinity between them, but they differ at the same time in their words. Their number is very great, for they are numerous in the countries lying between India and China, while in the latter country every province out of eighteen is believed to have its own tongue, exclusive of the different languages spoken by many uncivilised tribes of the mountains. Now, we have at the very least two very distinct races of men speaking these languages so much resembling each other in sound and structure—namely, the race which embraces the Burmese, Siamese, and others, and that which embraces the Chinese; the first differing more widely from the last than either of them do from the Japanese, who speak a polysyllabic language.

The native languages of America afford another refutation of the theory that language and race are equivalent. These, and they count by hundreds, have, with a single exception, the same phonetic character, and above all, the same strange and peculiar grammatical structure, from Tierra del Fuego to the Arctic Circle, while, with rare exceptions of neighbouring tribes, they differ wholly in their words. As, with one exception, the race is here the same, language and race ought to be found coincident. But it happens that there is a language spoken by the Red man of a totally different structure from all the rest, and this, too, in the very heart of the continent. Mr. Prescott, in his *History of the Conquest of Mexico*, neatly describes the usual structural character of the American languages as "a system which, bringing

the greatest number of ideas within the smallest possible compass, condenses whole sentences into a single word, displaying a curious mechanism, in which some discern the hand of the philosopher, and others only the spontaneous efforts of the savage." The same writer describes the anomaly above referred to thus: "A remarkable exception is found in the Othomie or Otomie language, which covers a wider territory than any other but the Mexican in New Spain, and which, both in its monosyllabic composition, so different from those around it, and its vocabulary, shows a very singular affinity with the Chinese."

Notwithstanding the affinity alleged in the above quotation between the languages of China and the speech of a people of the interior of America, no ethnologist, I am satisfied, will believe that the resemblance has any other source than pure accident. Considering the thousands of languages spoken by mankind, the wonder seems rather to be that such coincidences are not more frequent than we find them.

But, independent of the lingual exception just referred to, there is also one of race. The Esquimaux, a totally different race from the rest of the Americans, and who are well known never even to commix with the Red man, speak a language of the very same structure—namely, that which philologists have appropriately called "agglomeration."

Other regions of the world afford cogent illustrations of the fact which I am now attempting to elucidate. The nations of the south of India speak languages differing in sound and structure from those of the northern portion of the same continent. With the exception of a few words borrowed from one language of the latter, they differ from them even in their sound, structure, and vocabularies. Yet there is no reason to conclude that the people of the south belong less to the Hindu race than the people of the north, for they have the same stature, the same form of features, the same black complexion, and the same mental endowments; and, indeed, it may be added, in proof of the latter, that they have attained an equal and similar measure of civilisation.

There is a common agreement in sound and structure, but by no means in fundamental words, between the many languages which have been designated the Malayan; and within the proper Malay Archipelago the race of man is the same, a brownish yellow one, of short stature with flat features. In so far, then, as sound and structure are concerned, we ought to find here language and race going hand in hand. But it happens that even within that archipelago itself, in so far at least as phonetic character is concerned, there exists a striking exception on a considerable scale; for all the inhabitants of the large island of

Celebes and the neighbouring isles speak tongues so widely differing in sound from the ordinary Malayan, that words of the languages of the latter are hardly ever introduced into them without sustaining some material corruption. The great group of the Philippines contiguous to the Malayan Archipelago is, with the exception of a few diminutive Negros, peopled by the Malayan race. In sound and in grammatical structure, yet differing in their words, there runs a common character through all the Philippine languages, and a very peculiar one, which distinguishes them from all other tongues, and very distinctly so from the Malay languages, from which, even in their vocabularies, we find only a few borrowed words from the latter, and these so mutilated in conformity with Philippine pronunciation, as to be often difficult of detection.

It is the same language, with immaterial dialectic differences, and the same race of man which exist in the countless, or at least the as yet uncounted isles of the Pacific Ocean, extending from the Tonga group to Easter Island, and from Hawai to New Zealand. So far as language and race are concerned, they here go together; but in the islands of the Northern Pacific we find, to all appearance, the same race of man speaking many different tongues, and having nothing in common with the wide-spread tongue referred to except a small number of Malayan words, equally borrowed by both parties.

That language is no evidence of race in the case of the nations speaking what ethnologists have called the Semitic tongues, may, I think, be satisfactorily shown. That there should be much in common between the languages so called is what we should naturally look for, from the geographical character of the region in which they are spoken, immemorially the seat of conquests and reconquests; and such in reality is the fact. There are, however, wide differences in the languages as well as in the characters, physical and mental, of the people designated Semitic, which forbid us from concluding that they are of the same race. Thus, of all the tongues in question, the Arabic, the language of the people who entered the latest on the career of conquest, and who only twelve centuries ago were but divided barbarians, is the most complex in its structure and the most copious in its terms, or, at least, the most abounding in words, while the Hebrew, a written language two thousand years before the Arabs, then shepherds and robbers, had issued from their deserts, is one of the simplest in structure and least copious in its vocabulary of all the tongues which have been called Semitic.

Even if it could be proved that all the languages called Semitic were sister tongues, it would by no means follow that all the people speaking them belonged to the same race of man. It is

notoriously the reverse with the Ethiopic languages, which are considered to be of the Semitic class, and which, notwithstanding, are spoken by dark-coloured men, far nearer to Negros than to Jews or Arabs.

But between the Arabs on the one side, and the Jews, Tyrians, and other nations of the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, to all appearance of the same race with the Jews, on the other, judging by their respective historic achievements, there seems enough to authorise us to consider the two parties to be of distinct races. Thus, with the Jews originated the unity of the Deity and the religion of civilised mankind. They gave birth to a work which, for elevation of thought, simplicity, and beauty, viewing it only as the mere product of human intellect, no other Asiatic people has even made an approach to. The Jews produced a great legislator and a great leader, whose skill rescued them, a small people, from the bondage of a powerful nation, and established their independence. The Jews, now scattered over the world, are always the equals, and sometimes the superiors, of the races among whom it has been their destiny to be settled.

The Tyrians were the first people who engaged in remote foreign commerce. They planted a colony in distant Africa, and in time that colony became a formidable rival to the most powerful people of ancient Europe, giving birth to one of the greatest captains that the world has ever seen. I see that the able, but not always impartial, historian of *The Consulate and the Empire*, considers it an honour to his hero to be compared to Hannibal—even, indeed, to be considered second to him.

What have the Arabs done in comparison with all this to entitle them to be considered as belonging to the same race of man? But for their religion, and even that they borrowed from the Jews, and in borrowing corrupted, they would have been but vulgar Asiatic conquerors of the ordinary stamp. In the fervour inspired by that religion, they pushed their conquests even so far as to have penetrated into Europe. After little more than three centuries' duration, the empire which they established was overthrown by a horde of Turks. In due time they were expelled from the little corner of Europe which they occupied, and, instead of keeping pace with the nations of Europe, they have since relapsed into the stagnant condition of an ordinary Asiatic people.

In science the Arabs have been but humble and superficial imitators of the Greeks. Their greatest literary performance is the Koran, written while they were yet sheer barbarians; and this is justly characterised by the author of the *Decline and Fall*, no adverse witness, as "the endless incoherent rhapsody of fable and precept and declamation which seldom excites a sentiment or

an idea, which sometimes crawls in the dust, and is sometimes lost in the clouds."

The only man of first-rate eminence that the Arabs have produced in twelve centuries' time is the founder of the religion which takes its name from him, for the other Arabian worthies are, in the eye of civilisation, but of second or third-rate order. My friend Mr. Carlyle has included Mahomed among his heroes. It appears to me that he was only a bold, skilful, astute, and successful enthusiast, and that, if he was a hero at all, bating the religion which he stole, he was one only in the sense in which Gengis and Timur were heroes.

But between the Jews and Arabs there will probably be found even sufficient physical differences to entitle us to consider them as distinct races. The Jew is fairer than the Arab, has often a variety in the colours of the hair and eyes, which the Arab hardly ever has. He has more massy features and a robuster frame.

Among the languages classed as Semitic are the Ethiopic tongues; but as these are the languages of a peculiar race of man, at least as near to African Negros as to Jews or Arabs, it is clear enough that here, at least, language fails as a test of race. No doubt there is an affinity between the Arabic and Ethiopic tongues; but the question here is obviously one of history, and not of race.

The last example I shall quote is that of the inhabitants of the chain of the Caucasus, a country equal in extent to England. This region, although geographically in Asia, is, in so far as race is concerned, European—a question decided by the fair skin, and the variety in the colour of the eyes and hair, which is the characteristic or prerogative of the people of Europe. The Caucasians, uniformly of the same race and, with small difference, even of the same manners, speak, notwithstanding, independently of many dialects, from seven to eight languages, wholly different from each other.

If, then, language were a test of race, we should be tracing some of the Negros settled in America, first to England and then to Germany and Italy, and others first to Spain and ultimately to the same Italy. History alone tells from whence they proceeded and how they came to be planted in a land, before their arrival a stranger to their race. There exists in India a colony of Persians who have been settled there for a thousand years, and who, although they have lost their parent tongue, have preserved their religion with the dead tongue which described it and the purity of their blood. Language, except that which exists in their sacred writings, would in this case be of no service in tracing their race or lineage; but the history of the event is of sufficient authenticity to guide us. At the southern extremity of Africa

there exists a little colony of men of the Malayan race. By their physical form we might guess that the people were of that race ; but in the absence of history we should not know whence they came or how they came, or that the majority of their forefathers were not proper Malays at all, but parties speaking several other tongues. History alone could tell us that the ancestors of the colonists were slaves brought by their Dutch masters directly from Java and Sumatra, but often also the denizens of several other islands besides.

Although language, then, be no safe guide to race, there certainly occur many cases in which they are, at least, concomitant. The Hottentots, whose language is as singular as their physical form, are an example. We can readily believe that they never had any other tongue than that which they now speak, and that it was themselves who laid its first foundations, shortly after they were called into existence. But rude and isolated races are not the only exceptions, for we find examples also in powerful civilised ones. The foundations of the Teutonic, the Slavonic, and many other tongues are probably coeval with the earliest appearance of the races which speak them.

The great diversity which is found in the sound and structure of languages, often unconnected with race, is a subject of curious contemplation ; but the cause which has led to it is, I suspect, a mystery which admits of no solution. In some languages the majority of words consist of more than one syllable, while in others all the words, without exception, consist of single syllables, to the exclusion, of course, of all harmony in pronunciation, so that a Chinese seems rather to chatter than to speak. In some tongues there is a wide compass of sounds, and in others a very limited one. The Sanskrit has thirty-four consonants, the English twenty-four, the Malay only nineteen, and the most widely-spread tongue of the islands of the Pacific but seven. Some languages deal greatly in vowels, as the Italian, the Malay, and above all, the language of the Pacific just referred to, in which the vowels are as numerous as the consonants, and where every syllable and every word must terminate in a vowel. In many languages there exist vowels and consonants, with combinations of the latter, which no stranger can pronounce.

In the structure of languages there is also a great diversity. Some original tongues are of great complexity, and others equally original of great simplicity. The Sanskrit noun has seven cases, three numbers and three genders all formed by inflections. The Malay noun has no inflections, relation being expressed by prepositions, and gender and number by adjectives. Yet the Malay, for all we know to the contrary, is just as original a language as the Sanskrit. From the languages of simple structure, I, of

course, exclude derivative tongues, the cause of their simplicity being well understood, namely, the compromise between conquerors and conquered for mutual convenience, by which easy prepositions, adjectives, and auxiliaries come to be substituted for difficult inflections.

Some have suggested that the differences in phonetic character and grammatical formation which prevail may have sprung from original and innate differences in the physical and mental organisation of races. In favour of this hypothesis, the difference which is known to exist in the voice or utterance of certain varieties of the lower animals of the same species has been adduced. The low of the European and Indian ox is widely different. The ox of Tibet, which readily multiplies with the cattle of the Indian plain, does not low at all, but grunts. The dogs of Australia, and those of the islands of the Pacific, two distinct varieties, do not bark, or bay, or howl, their sole utterance being a growl. Another argument in favour of this hypothesis consists in the known imperfection with which one race speaks the language which, losing its own, it has adopted from another. The Negros of America, who for some generations have lost their native tongues and adopted the languages of Europe, seem to speak the latter after an African pronunciation and structure.

Such a theory, however, is perhaps sufficiently refuted by the well-ascertained fact, so wonderful is the flexibility and compass of the human organs, that the children of races the most opposite, when duly taught from infancy, will acquire a complete mastery over any foreign languages, be they ever so difficult of pronunciation or complex in structure.

---

II.—*Some Observations on the Psychological Differences which exist among the Typical Races of Man.* By ROBERT DUNN, Esq., F.R.C.S.Eng.

(*Read February* 3, 1863; *and at the Meeeting of the British Association at Cambridge*, 1862.)

PAPERS of a physiological and psychological character have so rarely been read at the meetings of this Society, and in the printed volumes of its *Transactions* are so few and far between, that I make no apology, nor do I feel any hesitation, in asking your attention, on the present occasion, to some observations bearing upon these departments of Ethnology; satisfied as I am, that, if there be one branch of our science more interesting and important than another, it is that which relates to the psychological differ-